

around the world who look to the United States for inspiration and support in their own democratic struggles.

We see that in places like Cuba today. Looking around the globe, we see China stripping away Hong Kong's autonomy and freedoms at an alarming pace. Military dictators are cementing their illegitimate rule in places like Burma and Mali, eroding and eliminating the institutions of democracy, while Russia and Belarus have imprisoned political opponents without accountability.

At the same time, an unprecedented 80 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes, communities, and countries. We must look no farther than our own southern border to see the destruction, desperation, and displacement wrought by violence, climate change, and lack of economic opportunity.

All of these developments negatively impact American national security interests. Our Secretary of State and, indeed, our country need senior human rights leadership of the caliber of Ms. Zeya.

The fact that the nomination of Ms. Zeya—a nominee so superbly qualified and whose leadership is so essential to rebuilding the State Department—has languished for 82 days is a travesty. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in voting to confirm her to the position of Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, and I hope my Republican colleagues will stop blocking qualified and critical nominees to the Nation's foreign policy and national security mission from moving forward.

With that, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida.

CUBA

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the new day of freedom dawning in Cuba and the brave Cubans marching for freedom across the island. For decades, the Cuban people have suffered atrocities, oppression, and misery at the hands of the communist Castro regime.

I have repeatedly told the story of Sirley Ávila León, a Cuban woman who was attacked by Cuban security forces in 2015. They cut off her hand and stuck her arm in the mud to make sure it got infected. Her crime? She complained that the regime was going to shut down a school in her neighborhood.

I have spoken to brave leaders like José Daniel Ferrer and the courageous members of his Patriotic Union of Cuba who are fighting every day to defend human rights, freedom, and the democratic movement in Cuba. Activists like José Daniel Ferrer and the artists of the San Isidro Movement are the future of Cuba, not the ruthless communist regime.

Today, the people of Cuba are saying: Enough. Across Cuba, people are marching in the streets to protest against communist rule and demand the freedom, liberty, and basic human

rights that have been stolen from them for decades by the brutally oppressive Cuban regime. Their demands are simple: libertad.

What we are seeing in Cuba should send a clear message to the world. Communism is a failed ideology that does nothing but lead to suffering and oppression. Communism doesn't work. Socialism doesn't work.

The people of Cuba are crying out for freedom. They are denouncing the oppressive communist rule that has brought ruin to their nation for more than 60 years. The message from the Cuban people to Diaz-Canel and Raul Castro has never been more clear: Your time is up. And the regime is terrified of the Cuban people. They are attacking peaceful protesters in an effort to silence them. Right now, José Daniel Ferrer, members of his family, and other leaders from his group are reportedly missing, likely kidnapped by the regime.

This disgusting assault on the people of Cuba cannot go unchecked. We cannot ignore this historic moment in the fight for freedom. We understand the value and importance of freedom in our everyday lives, and it is our duty to support and stand up for those who are oppressed by dictators and denied the right the live freely.

Today, I stand proudly with the heroic freedom fighters across Cuba who have taken to the streets, determined to regain their freedom and put an end to the Castro dictatorship.

Now, the Biden administration must lead the freedom-loving nations of the world in loud and unequivocal denouncement of the brutal communist Castro regime and in support of the liberty, democracy, and human rights the Cuban people call for and rightfully deserve.

We must be clear. For decades, Cuba has been the root of instability in Latin America and represented a terrible threat to the national security of the United States. The Castro regime harbors terrorist groups; has gotten rid of free and fair elections; threatens and arbitrarily arrests critics, journalists, and political activists; and props up other ruthless dictators, like Maduro in Venezuela and Ortega in Nicaragua.

Today, the American people must join freedom-loving Cubans in saying that the oppression ends now. We cannot lift sanctions or restore diplomatic relations with the Cuban dictatorship. We should not offer another lifeline to this brutal communist dictatorship.

I urge the Biden administration to impose further sanctions on the tyrannical Cuban regime. We cannot let up. There must be consequences for this heinous oppression and attacks on peaceful protesters.

To the people of Cuba: You are not alone. I stand with you in this fight. Florida stands with you in this fight. The United States of America stands with you in this fight.

The freedom of Cuba is closer than ever, and we are not going to stop until

we see a new day of freedom, democracy, and "Patria y Vida" in Cuba.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in Spanish.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(English translation of statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

To the people of Cuba: You are not alone. I stand with you in this fight. Florida stands with you in this fight. The United States of America stands with you in this fight.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 67, Uzra Zeya, of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights).

Charles E. Schumer, Jon Ossoff, Margaret Wood Hassan, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Ron Wyden, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jacky Rosen, Cory A. Booker, Tammy Duckworth, John Hickenlooper, Jon Tester, Edward J. Markey, Tammy Baldwin, Brian Schatz, Gary C. Peters, Tina Smith.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Uzra Zeya, of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 71, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 253 Ex.]

YEAS—71

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| Baldwin | Cortez Masto | Kaine |
| Bennet | Crapo | Kelly |
| Blumenthal | Duckworth | King |
| Blunt | Durbin | Klobuchar |
| Brown | Feinstein | Leahy |
| Burr | Fischer | Lujan |
| Cantwell | Gillibrand | Manchin |
| Capito | Graham | Markey |
| Cardin | Grassley | McConnell |
| Carper | Hassan | Menendez |
| Casey | Heinrich | Merkley |
| Collins | Hickenlooper | Moran |
| Coons | Hirono | Murphy |
| Cornyn | Hyde-Smith | Murray |